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January 21, 2004  
Daniel J. Halo

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1-21-2004  
DATE

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants : Gilbert M. Aust et al.

Serial No. : 09/707,445  
(Reissue of U.S. Patent  
No. 5,540,706, issued  
July 30, 1996)

Filing Date : November 6, 2000

For : SURGICAL INSTRUMENT

Group Art Unit : 3731

Examiner : Michael H. Thaler

Attorney Docket No. : A31-2047RE

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER R3700

**AMENDMENT**

**Introductory Comments**

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated August 5, 2003, please reconsider the above-identified application in view of the following amendments.

**STATUS OF CLAIMS:**

Claims 1, 2, and 4 are pending and have been allowed.

Claims 8 and 9 have been canceled.

Claims 3, 5-7, 10, and 11 are pending and stand rejected.